

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-11 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-9 are amended. Claims 10 and 11 are new. Claims 1, 2, 3, 4 and 10 are independent.

Prior Art Rejection

Claims 1-5 and 7-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U. S. Patent No. 6,141,442 to Chen (hereinafter "Chen"). This rejection, insofar as it pertains to the presently pending claims, is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

As amended, independent claims 1-4 each recites extracting an area in an image and performing at least one of the following: adjusting a density of the extracted image area based on density information of an area in the image surrounding the extracted image area, and adjusting color of the extracted image area based on color information of the area in the image surrounding the extracted image area.

Applicant respectfully submits that Chen provides no teaching of adjusting the density of an image area based on density information regarding a surrounding area in the image. This position taken by Applicant is supported by the fact that the Examiner, in the outstanding Office Action, makes no assertion that Chen teaches or suggests such a feature. Instead, the Examiner relies upon Chen's alleged disclosure of adjusting color in an

extracted image based on color information in a surrounding area to anticipate the claimed adjusting feature in claims 1-4 (see Office Action at Section 9 in page 4).

Chen discloses a method for encoding video frames for transmission. Chen discloses segmenting each frame into regions and generating segmentation data. This segmentation data includes maps identifying each segmented region to which the pixels of the video frame belong, without providing the actual pixel values. Chen further discloses that these maps are used to generate multiple region frames for each video frame, the region frames having a one-to-one correspondence with the segmented regions in the video frame. Each of Chen's region frames includes the original pixel values (i.e., colors) of the corresponding region ("subject region"), while replacing the pixel values of the other regions with values corresponding to predetermined colors. Chen discloses that these predetermined colors are chosen in order to facilitate compression of each region frame.

Chen further discloses a method for receiving and processing the region frames in order to reconstruct the corresponding video frame. During this process, Chen discloses that the pixel values for each segmented region in the video frame are obtained from that region's respective region frame. Accordingly, the pixel values for the different regions in the reconstructed video frame are obtained from different region frames, according to Chen. Chen further discloses that a "blending" process may be performed to generate pixel

values at overlapping portions of segmented regions in the video frame. Chen teaches that this process blends the pixel values at the overlapping portion of each of these regions, which are obtained from their respective region frames.

The Examiner relies upon Chen's disclosure of blending pixels to teach the claimed adjusting of color in an extracted area of the image based on a surrounding area. However, as amended, independent claims 1-4 each require the color adjusting to be performed based on color information of a surrounding area in the same image as the extracted area. Chen fails to disclose this feature; instead, Chen adjusts the color (pixel values) of an extracted region of one region frame (i.e., image) from the pixel values of another region frame.

Furthermore, this blending process of Chen is not performed to compensate for an effect of color in a surrounding area on the visual perception of another area. Instead, Chen's blending is based on the effects that colors corresponding to the same overlapping area have on one another.

For the reasons stated above, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1-4 are allowable. Furthermore, Applicant submits that claims 5 and 7-9 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency on independent claim 1.

Claim 6 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chen. In this rejection, the Examiner proposes a modification of Chen that allegedly renders claim 6 unpatentable. However, Applicant respectfully

submits that this proposed modification fails to remedy the deficiencies of Chen set forth above in connection with independent claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 6 is allowable at least by virtue of its dependency on allowable claim 1.

New Independent Claim

New independent claim 10 recites adjusting a density of an image area based on density information of a surrounding area in the image. As stated above, Applicant finds no teaching of such a feature in the cited prior art. Further, the Examiner makes no assertion that such a teaching exists in the prior art. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 10 is in condition for allowance at least for this reason.

Conclusion

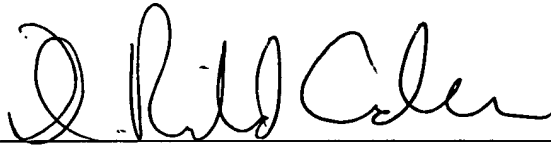
The Examiner is respectfully requested to enter this Amendment After Final. In view of the above amendments and remarks, the Examiner is further respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the various claim rejections and issue a Notice of Allowance in connection with the pending claims.


Should the Examiner believe that any outstanding matters remain in the present application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Jason W. Rhodes (Reg. No. 47,305) at the telephone number of the undersigned in order to discuss this application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By 
D. Richard Anderson, #40,439


DRA/JWR/slb

P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000